

porations. I will ask for an increase, as I said in the campaign, on the income tax of the wealthiest Americans and corporations, along with the incentives that I have recommended to get people—lower their tax burden if, but only if, they make investments in this country.

Our situation is worsened, and we may have to broaden the range of revenues which we seek. But we should begin by asking those who can most afford to pay to do so.

I have also been persuaded by my Treasury Secretary that it is unwise, indeed impossible, to raise the individual income tax rate unless there is a corresponding increase in the corporate tax rate to avoid tax shifting. But the corporations should also have incentives to reinvest as their rates are raised. And so we have done both things in the plan we will recommend.

I talked a lot in the campaign about an issue which has relatively small dollar impact but great significance to the American working people, and that is the enormously increased rate of executive compensation in the last 12 years as compared with the compensation of workers. I want to make a proposal that deals with the fact that the Tax Code should no longer subsidize excessive pay of chief executives and other high executives, excessive defined as unrelated to the productivity of the enterprise.

I believe, finally, that if all of us do what we're supposed to do, if I can ask every American honestly to look in the mirror and say, what do I want this country to look like in 4 years; what do I want this country to look like in 10 years; what do I want this country to look like when my children are my age; do I really want to let yet another opportunity go by when we just wander through a year instead of really investing in our people and our future, instead of really having a technology policy, instead of really having an economic strategy, instead of really doing something about the credit crunch, instead of really doing something about health care, instead of really doing something about the deficit, just because I wish I didn't have to change my ways—I think almost every American will look in the mirror and say, no, no, this year we'll pull together and do our part.

If the business community leads the way, Congress will follow. I need your help. I hope you'll be there.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:49 a.m. in the East Room at the White House.

### Exchange With Reporters at a Meeting With Arkansas High School Students

February 11, 1993

**The President.** This is the Close-Up program, but they're not close up. [Laughter]

Did you hear what I said today, Helen? [Helen Thomas, United Press International]

**Q.** What?

**The President.** When I went in from the run? I said you had a great voice. It pierced the atmosphere.

**Q.** Yes, but you didn't answer any questions.

**The President.** I know, all your questions—have any answer—

### Attorney General

**Q.** Got a woman for Attorney General?

**Q.** Mr. President, are you not committed to an across-the-board business tax increase?

**Q.** Which one's going to be President someday?

**Q.** You've got 14 lawyers in the Cabinet. Which one's going to be Attorney General?

**The President.** Well, we thought it would be part of my productivity in Government. We have so many lawyers in the Cabinet—something I didn't know, actually, until someone pointed it out to me—that we could just rotate the job once a month among the lawyers. [Laughter]

**Q.** Mr. President, you had some tough words for the businessmen today. Will there be similarly tough words for middle class taxpayers come next week?

**The President.** I talked to them last night. I think they got the message. I was really pleased with that last night. I liked it because the people who were asking questions, basically, they talked to me just like they did when I was a candidate. I was glad there was no difference in their—

**Q.** Why do you think we're different?

**The President.** —questions to challenge me, I like it.

**Q.** Why do you think the press is not with you?

**The President.** Why what?

**Q.** You said the press is not in your world.

**The President.** Why, what do you mean?

**Q.** We think differently or something?

**Q.** You said we think differently.

**The President.** No, no, I said just on—what was I talking about? [*Laughter*]

**Q.** Washington.

**Q.** Press corps.

**The President.** No, no, no, there was a specific question.

**Q.** Press conferences among the White House press corps. And you said I answered that question—

**The President.** —the question was about. You've got to get—before you lay that on me, you've got to put it in proper context now. What was—

**Q.** Okay, you said we see the world differently.

**The President.** Well, I think sometimes you do, but that's what you're hired to do. That's your job.

**Q.** Is it a man for Attorney General, sir?

**The President.** It's a lawyer. How's that?

NOTE: The exchange began at 1:50 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

### Exchange With Reporters Following a Meeting With Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe of Japan

February 11, 1993

**The President.** We just had a very serious trade talk here. We decided that when all the people came in and took all the pictures that I was contributing to the Japanese trade surplus because of all the film that was being shot.

**Q.** Are you relieved, sir, that you have finally settled upon an Attorney General?

**The President.** I'll discuss that at 4:30 p.m.

**Q.** Are you asking for greater access for American goods in Japan?

**The President.** This is just the beginning of our relationship. We had a little talk about trade. And Minister Watanabe said that he thought that we shouldn't become protectionist in our relationship. And I agreed, but I said I thought we had to bring the trade deficit down and that I would be working with him on it very firmly.

**Q.** Did he agree to that?

**The President.** Yes, he agreed. As a matter of fact, he discussed some things that he thought would be done. So we had a good talk. But it was very preliminary. You shouldn't attach any burden on him because he came to see me today.

**Q.** So you're going to be friends?

**The President.** Well, I think we'll be friends and we'll have a few disagreements and a lot of agreements.

**Q.** So is this lawyer you mentioned a woman?

**The President.** At 4:30 p.m.

**Q.** At each photo op you go a little bit further.

**Q.** Will we see her on the way out?

**The President.** I hope not.

[*At this point, one group of reporters left the room and another group entered.*]

**Q.** Mr. President, will you meet with the Japanese Prime Minister by the end of March? Have any plans?

**The President.** I don't think a specific date has been set yet, but I want very much to meet with him in the near future. The Japanese-American relationship is very important, not only to Japan and to America but to the rest of the world. And I think it's important that we meet pretty soon, and I'm trying to set it up now.

**Q.** Was there a big agenda for this meeting, today's meeting?

**The President.** Was there a big agenda? Well, we talked for a good while, as you probably know, about a wide range of things,—everything from the AIDS crisis, to the situation in Russia, to the GATT round, to the necessity of resolving the trade differences between our two countries.

It was a good first meeting. I thought it was a good first meeting.